

In the Drawings:

Attached please a copy of the originally-filed FIGS. 1-5, and formal replacement FIGS. 1-5.

The new formal replacement figures add no new matter.

REMARKS

Claims 1-23 are pending in this application. Attached hereto is a complete listing of all claims in the application, with their current status listed parenthetically. By this Response, no claims have been amended.

Information Disclosure Statement

In paragraph 1 of the Office Action, the Examiner states that he cannot find references 63 and 66 as listed on Form PTO 1449. The Applicant is also unable to locate these references, and therefore is unable to submit these two references for consideration by the Examiner.

Drawings

Applicant submits formal replacement FIGS. 1-5, as well as a copy of the originally-filed FIGS. 1-5. The new drawings add no new subject matter.

Rejection Under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b)

Pending claims 1-2, 4-6, 8-9, 11-12, 14-16 and 18-23 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent 5,812,671 ("Ross"). As discussed below, Applicant respectfully traverses this rejection.

A. The Law of Anticipation and Enabling Prior Art References

A claim is anticipated only if each and every element as set forth in the claim is found, either expressly or inherently described, in a single prior art reference. M.P.E.P. § 2131. The identical invention must be shown in as complete detail as is contained in the claim. *Id.*

However, Applicant submits that independent claims 1, 5, 9, 18 and 19 have elements that cannot be found, either expressly or inherently, in Ross. For example, claim 5 recites:

"A method for forwarding messages in a **multi-node** network comprising decrypting, by a forwarding node, **each message received by said forwarding node** prior to determining a destination for said received message."

Similarly, independent claims 1, 9, 18, and 19 all recite, in part, unconditionally decrypting each message received by a forwarding node in a multi-node network.

Ross contains no teaching or suggestion of these claim elements. Instead, Ross teaches a cryptographic communication system that requires messages to be sent to a **network secure communications gateway**, which stores the current encryption/decryption algorithms and keys for parties **registered** with the network secure communications gateway (col. 1, lines 60-64) [emphasis added]. FIG. 2 of Ross shows that in step 54 the encrypted file is sent to the encryption gateway. In step 60, Ross determines if the intended recipient (B) is a client of the encryption gateway, and if B is not a client, an error message is sent to the sender (A) [FIG. 2, and col. 3, lines 45-60].

Thus, Ross requires users to register with a particular node, or encryption gateway, which is a specific node that has access to the encryption and decryption algorithms for all the nodes in the system (col. 3, lines 1-6).

This contrasts with Applicant's independent claims 1, 5, 9, 18 and 19, which recite that any node in a multi-node system can decrypt a received message. This decreases network workload as each node is not required to transmit its encrypted packet to a specific encryption gateway, as taught in Ross.

Therefore, Applicant respectfully submits that the rejection has been traversed, as the cited reference fails to teach or suggest the elements recited in Applicant's originally-filed independent claims 1, 5, 9, 18 and 19. Because claims 2-4, 6-8, 10-17 and 20-23 depend from claims 1, 5, 9, 18 and 19, it is respectfully submitted that the rejection of claims 2-4, 6-8, 10-17 and 20-23 has been traversed by virtue of their dependency from claims 1, 5, 9, 18 and 19. M.P.E.P. § 2143.03.

Change of Attorney Address

Accompanying this Response to Office Action is PTO form SB/122, Change of Correspondence Address. Please change the correspondence address to:

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Conclusion

Applicant believes that this Response has addressed all items in the Office Action and now places the application in condition for allowance. Accordingly, favorable reconsideration and allowance of claims 1-23 at an early date is solicited. Should any issues remain unresolved, the Examiner is invited to telephone the undersigned.

Respectfully submitted,

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